

GRINLING GIBBONS 300 AWARD

IN STONE AND WOOD CARVING

The Grinling Gibbons Tercentennial Award is a competition for emerging craftspeople, carvers and sculptors as part of the 300th anniversary commemorations of Britain's greatest master carver.

The Award seeks to showcase the breadth of creativity and talent that lives in Britain's next generations of carvers and to celebrate this country's excellence in training and skilled craftsmanship which has helped nurture students to this level. It recognises the significant challenges faced within the industry of carving today due to the changing commercial landscape of handcrafts, shortages in funding, patronage and progression opportunities, and consequently the loss of irreplaceable, at-risk heritage skills.

The Award for carving in wood and stone (co-organised by the Grinling Gibbons Society and Master Carvers' Association) will make a direct connection with Gibbons' own incomparable talent to sculpt in both forms of media. It seeks to provide competitive inspiration for the production of new figurative works, pushing upcoming and early-career carvers to aspire and strive for 'the best' in design, technique and execution. It will provide a national platform for showcasing their work and bring public and professional recognition along with exposure to expert/specialised critical feedback aimed at encouraging and honing their talent further.

In the same way that Grinling Gibbons' carving inspired and demonstrated the extraordinary things that could be created by the hand of one individual, the Award seeks to offer a visual education in the value and importance of heritage skills and to promote to wider public audiences the exceptional talent that exists but which need ongoing support and patronage.

The aim is that this awards programme will forge and strengthen links across the diverse community of craftsmanship bringing together colleges, cathedrals, workshops and business engaged in supporting early career carvers, and providing opportunities for cross-organisational conversations and working.

Ultimately by the end of the celebration year, there will be a new cohort of craftspeople who have been inspired by Grinling Gibbons anew, helping sustain heritage skills and his ongoing legacy.

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HRH The Prince of Wales, KG, KT, GCB, OM